

FISH and WILDLIFE COMMISSION AGENDA ITEM COVER SHEET

Meeting Date: August 7, 2014

Agenda Item: Fishing Regulation Changes for 2015

Division: Fisheries **Action Needed:** Proposed

Time Needed on Agenda for this Presentation: 30 minutes

Background

The F&W Commission has authority to make changes to FWP fishing regulations. The process for reviewing and amending fishing regulations is based on a four-year cycle. The first year of each cycle is dedicated to actively soliciting ideas for changes from the public. During the following three years of the cycle ("off-cycle" years), ideas are only solicited internally from FWP biologists, fish managers and enforcement personnel. Regulation changes are proposed to the Commission during off-cycle years only if they meet certain criteria: achieve enforcement needs, provide clarification, are important for species conservation, are removing regulations no longer relevant, or fulfill direction provided in management plans. 2015 is an off-cycle year; the next year with full public involvement will be 2016.

Public Involvement Process & Results

FWP will post its Department's recommendations for regulation changes on the FWP website prior to the August 7 Commission meeting. After the meeting, FWP will conduct a 30-day public comment period. Following public input, FWP will prepare recommendations for final regulation changes and present these to the Commission in October.

Alternatives and Analysis

The following is a brief summary of FWP's recommendations for 2015 fishing regulation changes:

Missouri River, Toston Dam to Canyon Ferry Reservoir: change walleye bag limit to be the same as the current limit for Canyon Ferry Reservoir.

Holter Reservoir: liberalize the bag limit for yellow perch.

Lake Mary Ronan: remove bag limit for northern pike and allow for spearing.

Alternatively, the Commission could propose different regulation changes or modify those recommended by FWP.

Agency Recommendation & Rationale

FWP recommends that the Commission propose the regulation changes as presented for public comment.

Proposed Motion

I move to propose the recommended changes to the 2015 fishing regulations and instruct FWP to solicit comments from the public.